

# Freedom

A N A R C H I S T F O R T N I G H T L Y

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Threepence

"Slavery results from laws, laws are made by Governments, and, therefore, people can only be freed from slavery by the abolition of Governments."

LEO TOLSTOY

## London Power Strike Sheds Light Upon The Strength That Could Be Theirs!

# THE WORKERS' POWER

THERE are several aspects of the situation in Britain to-day which we believe to be promising, and which point to lessons which, if learned, could have a very good effect upon the workers' movements.

We do not refer to nationalisation of industry and the bank of England, nor to the National Health Scheme nor the other reforms which the Labour Government has introduced. What we refer to is the effects which these reforms are having upon the attitude of the workers—the other side of the medal, as it were.

The opponents of nationalisation could hardly have asked for different behaviour on the part of nationalised Boards which have shown themselves to be stiff-necked and pompous in their attitudes to the workers. And, indeed, how could it be otherwise, when they so often consist of the same individuals as were the old bosses under private enterprise?

This pomposity and pride have not been lost on the workers, who are beginning to realise that it may after all be the very existence of a boss which they have to challenge—the whole principle of authority which they have to fight.

### Unofficial Strikes

With very few, and minor, exceptions, every strike which the workers have undertaken since the advent of the Labour Government has been unofficial. They have been condemned alike by Government and Boards, the capitalist press and their own supposed leaders. The men have learned—the hard way—the unity of those in authority.

But they have also learned, or rather, re-learned what many had forgotten, that their own strength lies in unity, too. And, a new lesson for those who believed in nationalisation, they have learned that the State under "Socialist" leaders behaves in exactly the same way as the State under openly capitalist representatives.

### Workers are Needed Now

But, for almost the first time in peace-time since the Industrial Revolution, the employers need the workers much more than the workers need the employers. Don't misunderstand us. We know that fundamentally the workers have never needed the employers at all, but looking at circumstances simply as they are to-day, the situation wherein there are more jobs than workers is one which gives the workers terrific advantage—if they care to use it. And the dependence of this country, capitalistically speaking, upon the production drive, has created a far greater dependence by the employers

upon the workers—a dependence which the workers have so far been slow in exploiting, but which the employees and the Government have been at pains to cover up.

In spite of their protestations, the Tories must be very thankful for the Labour Government. It is true that it has taken some industries away from them, but they have been mainly the ones that showed least profits, such as mining and the railways, or were already partly under municipal control, such as electricity. When industries which are flourishing, such as iron and steel, Lord Lyle's sugar monopoly or insurance, are threatened, opposition becomes much louder. But the Capitalists, nevertheless, have much for which to thank the Labour Government, for this Government, which has the ear of the worker much more than a Tory leadership would, is able to pull the wool over the workers' eyes much more effectively, and, by the facade of reforms can pretend to be improving the workers' welfare.

Indeed, the word "State" is now almost always connected with the word "Welfare", so that its real function—that of protecting the status quo, the capitalist regime, is camouflaged and forgotten. Until strikes occur and troops are sent in as black-legs. (Continued on page 4)

### THE DUPLICITY OF POLITICIANS

"If we proceed with outmoded, absolute ideas of private property, we shall never make any progress."

—Signor de Gasperi, Prime Minister of Italy, to peasants in Calabria, November, 1949.

"The idea might get round that private property no longer existed, and at that point the Ministry of the Interior would have to intervene and a halt be called."

—Signor de Gasperi, Prime Minister of Italy, to the press in Rome, December, 1949.

(see PEASANT REVOLT IN ITALY, p. 3)

## ELECTIONS DOWN UNDER

IT was inevitable that the Labour reverses in New Zealand and Australia should have given rise to all kinds of wishful speculations on the part of Conservative propagandists here. To the interested spectator of the dreary game of politics the somersaults and contradictions and explanations, not to mention indignations and high moral tones, on both sides of the fence have been ridiculous enough. Just to underline them still further, however, the Labour victory at South Bradford brought out all the same arguments and quibbles—but this time from the other side. The Conservatives say that New Zealand and Australia are auguries for Britain, but South Bradford is no real test; the Labour Party pay uncouth respect to the free vote of the antipodean peoples, but regard them as having little to do with home affairs—South Bradford here provides a much more reliable pointer. And the reader of the daily press is supposed to take all this seriously.

Incongruous too is the analysis of the figures. "In simple figures," writes the *Tribune*, "the (Australian) Labour Party appears to have lost some 3 per cent. of the people who voted for it at the last election. These alone would have been enough to return the Labour Government." One is inclined to marvel at an electoral system in which such fine adjustments have such far-reaching consequences. Only 3 per cent! It is a commentary on the voting system.

### ABSURD

The matter of administration is of no small importance to the citizens, and the absurd and ridiculous aspect of elections ought to make them reflect on the whole business. The policies of the other side are represented as being widely different from one's own platform; yet it has become increasingly clear during the last few years that one administration is very like another, and that the problems facing a government do not admit many different solutions within the existing social and economic pattern. The editorial writer in the *Manchester Guardian* remarked "The victory of Mr. Menzies and Mr. Fadden is, however, being hailed as a victory over 'Socialism', and certainly their campaign has been fought on an ideological plane in a way that disguised the fact that in the practical affairs of government there are no wide differences of opinion between the serious men of all parties. In spite of the change, Australia will still have a 'Welfare State' and an economy running on something like Keynesian lines, and there will be no

change in foreign policy." The more it changes, the more it is the same thing.

### WHAT INFLUENCES THE VOTE

The papers have been busy analysing the reasons for the results, seldom very objectively. In the case of the individual voter, however, the factors influencing choice are usually narrow enough. There are those with party loyalties who vote according to that loyalty. Then there are those who feel that their own particular interests will be improved by the access to power of one or other of the contestants. Finally, there are the considerable number who cannot see that it will make much difference to them and who therefore don't vote at all. None of these groups—and together they represent the great bulk of the electorate—exercise their vote in any way from a broad view of the welfare of the community as a whole. Indeed, if they did, they would almost certainly abstain in a conscious manner.

The sovereign people are therefore somewhat irresponsible as arbiters of a country's destiny in the way of rulers. As the anarchists have contended for many, many years, you do not arrive at the truth by counting noses. But distrust of the mass democracies and their electoral methods does not imply adherence to autocratic systems. Democracy as we know it is discreditable because people are asked to vote upon matters which do not directly touch their lives and on which they can therefore have no informed or practical opinion. And they are required to consider policies which cover millions of people regardless of their diverse needs and situations. There are no solutions to problems when these are required to suit huge areas and populations. But men and women are well able to discuss the pros and cons of matters of immediate local interest to them—it is merely disillusioning to have to put up with the plans of bureaucrats who have no such contact with immediate matters. Democracy asks people to vote on matters they cannot have a valid opinion on, and deprives them of any say in the matters on which they hold strong and intelligent views.

The answer to the democratic failure, with its absurdities, its distortions and its deliberate lies and half truths, is decentralisation of administration and of responsibility. Such a change, however, if radically carried out, would be revolutionary, for it would render useless the existing system of government, would indeed be the end of government altogether. The government of men would have been replaced by the administration of things. J.H.

## Stalin's Empire of Yes-Men & Mummies

A FOUR-LINE item tucked away at the bottom of the page was all the space the national press gave to the news that Kostov, former Communist Vice-Premier of Bulgaria had been hanged as a traitor. [What an interesting commentary this is on the Values of newspaper editors. When Haigh, the acid-bath murderer, was hanged, the morning editions of the evening papers used banner headlines to announce the news; and the political murder that is going on in Europe to-day gets four lines!]

Traicho Kostov is yet one more prominent Communist leader to be liquidated in carrying out Russia's policy of stamping out any non-conformism among the Eastern bloc countries. The trial conformed to the usual pattern, from the violent language of the prosecution, the vocal hostility from the public benches to the now traditional custom of the defence lawyer being so overwhelmed by "proofs" of guilt put forward by the prosecution that he turns against his client and adds his denunciation to that of the prosecution.

But Kostov was a harder nut to crack, since he pleaded "not guilty" and refuted the written statement he had made before the trial started. What is more he maintained this attitude to the end of the seven-day trial. The reports state that: "In their final pleas to the Court, Kostov was the only one of the accused to claim innocence. He denied briefly and without emotion, charges of espionage and conspiracy but made no attempt to refute any charges or testimonies by his fellow accused which they repeated against him in their final statements."

The charges of which Kostov was found guilty were: (1) Kostov had been a police agent inside the Communist

party since 1942; (2) After 1944 he had worked for the British intelligence; (3) Kostov, acting on instructions of British and United States agents, had got in touch with Marshal Tito and plotted to make Bulgaria a Yugoslav "colony"; and (4) With Tito, he had planned the assassination of the late Bulgarian Premier, Georgi Dimitrov.

As the *Manchester Guardian* points out in an editorial comment (10/12/49) the Russians could not afford to admit that they wanted to put a stop to a policy of "fairly free discussion" within the parties "provided always that an outward appearance of unanimity is maintained". That is why the Bulgarian Government has had to try to associate Kostov with a murder-and-espionage story for which witnesses can be provided. And this is why Kostov's plea of not guilty considerably upset Russia's plans, and it would seem that the sentences imposed were meant to deter others from following Kostov's example, for the accused who all pleaded "guilty" escaped the death sentence, whereas Kostov, who pleaded "not guilty" has paid with his life.

An interesting parallel is to be found in the recent trial in Sarajevo (Yugoslavia) of nine Russians accused of espionage. The sentences ranged from three to twenty years hard labour; the accused who received the highest sentence was the only one to plead "not guilty" to the main charges!

A second interesting parallel is the background of the accused. Kostov, who was accused of espionage for Tito and the Western powers, has a long record of service in the C.P. Only two years ago, the Central Committee of the Bulgarian C.P. issued a long statement on the occasion of Kostov's fifty-first birthday, some extracts of which we reproduce below:

"Great are your achievements, Comrade Traicho Kostov, as the builder of the party, as teacher and instructor of the party members. Under your leadership and your heroic example, thousands of party members were educated into absolute loyalty to the party."

"Your deep Marxist-Leninist theoretical knowledge, your great culture, your famous industry and steadfastness, your modesty, your iron will, your unquestionable loyalty towards the party and the working class are those Bolshevik characteristics which beautify your whole fighting life, forever united with the struggle of the party."

"A loyal colleague of George Dimitrov, and his first assistant, you are to-day one of the most loved and respected leaders of our party, a great statesman and builder of new Bulgaria."

"Comrade Traicho Kostov! The Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party is wishing you good health and strength so that you may go on working just as loyally, unceasingly, and wholeheartedly for the party and the people; for the triumph of the economic plan, and the great historical achievements of the working class."

And now we are asked to believe that the man who, among all other things, sent Petkov to his death was, all the time, plotting to assassinate Dimitrov and was spying for the Americans!

In the Yugoslav trial of nine Russians spying for the Soviet Union, the ring-leader was "an orthodox priest", a "Tzarist law student" and a woman who "admitted co-operating with the Gestapo". A curious and unlikely collection of Russian spies, almost as curious and unlikely as the "Titoist-American Spy" Kostov.

Without appearing cynical one cannot but think that it was fortunate for Dimitrov (and Moscow) that he "died" before the Kostov trial started. The Reichstag fire "hero" might have quite easily found himself in the dock alongside his "loyal colleague". Instead, by dying just at the right moment, he is being built up as a hero and, according to a press report, his body is being preserved by the same secret process used for Lenin's remains.

There is no doubt that in the Stalinist Empire there is only room for "Yes men" and mummies.

LIBERTARIAN.

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# CRIMINALS & SOCIETY

IN the last two months there have appeared two important studies in the psychology and treatment of delinquency, under almost identical titles. Sir Norwood East's *Society and the Criminal*, and Dr. Paul Reiwald's *Society and its Criminals*, which might almost have been written as replies to one another, or as differing contributions to a symposium, are both solid contributions to criminology and penology, but their chief interest to non-specialists is the sharpness with which they bring out the division which exists between the two main currents in modern scientific thought and work on the subject of delinquency.

Sir Norwood East's book, under the imprint of the Stationery Office, and with a preface by the Chairman of the Prison Commission, is an exposition and an apology—it presents the furthest point which progressive opinion within the Prison Administration has reached in its attitude towards the criminal and his treatment. East himself occupies a unique position—he has a most extensive experience of the criminal in practice and in administration, he has in his time been criticised with equal force by traditionalists who regard him as a revolutionary, and by revolutionaries who regard him as a traditionalist. Reiwald's position is different—originally a barrister, he turned to psychology and sociology in their forensic aspects, and holds the readership in criminology at Geneva.

Apart from its medical interest as the product of very long and careful study, East's book should enable critics of the official system of crime prevention and criminal justice to understand what is in the mind of the intelligent scientist within that system. We very readily underestimate the problem presented to the official and the psychiatrist upon whose doorstep convicted persons are deposited, not in the hypothetical future, but under the present social system and within the environment of modern urban society. An accurate gauge of the underlying attitude can be found in East's theory of punishment, in which reformatory, deterrent, and retributive elements are recognised, in that order. Emphasis is laid on the over-riding claim of the security of society, though the rehabilitation of the offender is, subject to that claim, the concern of the penal psychiatrist as physician. Methods of punishment, and social customs which promote patterns of conduct to the status of crimes, are fit subjects for psychiatric study and analysis in terms of factual observation: the emphasis is on the gradual consolidation of progress on a basis of established fact—"wildcat" theories, the application of untried speculations, and all "arm-chair" penology by those who never saw a delinquent except in a film are equally condemned. It is difficult not to feel respect for this approach, though much of that respect belongs rather to East himself, as a scientist of manifest integrity and learning, rather than to the penal system. In certain passages, however, notably in his defence of retribution and of religious elements in the theory of punishment, and above all in his references to the atmosphere of prison, with its "bland and easily assimilated diet", the reader's confidence is badly shaken. This is particularly the case where East, in criticising the impractical suggestions of non-administrative psychiatrists, defines sentimentality as the pursuit of a policy for the emotional satisfaction which it gives, rather than for its fitness to achieve an ostensible purpose. It is precisely this type of sentimentality which manifests itself in the whole conception of retributive punishment, of coercion as a means of modifying conduct, and of law in coercive societies. So long as the premises of traditional law, and its professed intentions, are accepted at their face value, East's approach is adequate. We can re-

cognise him as one of the men who has done most for the decent and sensible treatment of the criminal in our own time. But it is precisely the premises and intentions which are in question.

At the beginning of his study, Reiwald describes how, during his own career at the Bar, he was disturbed by the emotional, if not orgiastic, atmosphere attending the trial and punishment of some types of crime. For East, and for the "mask" of society, crimes differ in gravity, but all menace society. For Reiwald, crimes are quite manifestly divisible into "satisfactory" and "unsatisfactory"—those which excite us emotionally and those which do not. It is not enough to regard law as a rational precaution, and punishment as a rational attempt to remove crime. Neither in the historical process which has given us our modern system of punishment, nor in the minds of Judges, is this the case. In the matter of sexual offences, East himself recognises this divergence between pretension and reality. Reiwald goes further. Common experience and the whole body of crime literature makes it perfectly obvious that the criminal is the focus of emotional forces whose intensity depends on the type of crime—murder is of all offences the most satisfactory; embezzlement carries no such emotional load. Reiwald goes on to suggest that so long as this ambivalence has existed, the intention of the law and the law-abiding public to suppress crime has always been secondary to the emotional need that criminals should continue to exist, and to discharge by their punishment the emotional potentials built up in those who conform outwardly to law. The case is relentlessly built up through psychology, anthropology, and primitive religion, through the acknowledged desire of many criminals to accept punishment, especially death, which leads to the notorious "deliberate mistake" in many patterns of aggressive crime: through the psychopathic attitude of many otherwise distinguished criminologists, who talk of an "army of criminals" menacing society, in contradiction of all statistical evidence: through the identity of execution with human sacrifice (until a century or so ago, the criminal was partly disguised as an animal on his journey to the gallows). While for East law and punishment can be regarded rationally, for Reiwald, and for a growing body of sociological opinion, they are the chief surviving example of a primitive religious ceremony. The evidence is too strong to be dismissed as speculation, and it cuts whole ground from under the feet of conservative penology.

It seems fairly clear that the attitude which Reiwald exemplifies must ultimately prevail. It carries far wider social implications than the author himself seems to recognise, since it automatically commits science to further and further study, not only of delinquents in court or in prison, but of delinquents in society and in office. Reiwald has no clear theory of social organisation to supplement his concrete suggestions, but such a theory is increasingly provided by sociology in other fields, and it is, in orientation, increasingly anarchist. The final argument which must appeal to the conservative as well as the reforming penologist is that of results. An increasing body of evidence from every quarter supports the view that socialisation can and does rehabilitate delinquents, while coercion does not. In Reiwald's words: "There is to-day an unequivocal answer to the question, what can be substituted for aggression in criminal law?—Non-violence and self-government as means of education." In modern social medicine we have yet another point at which revolution is being effected not by agitators waving posters but by the application of the normal methods of research to society.

# The Theory of Work of Wilhelm Reich-2

## VI

IN his attempt to be fair to the working boss, it seems to me Reich leans over backwards. It is true a boss can be productive, but not in his function of a boss, not in his function as an arbitrary authority, with power to command decisions, rational and irrational (mostly irrational) and to penalize by firing, lesser pay, starvation and many other ways, including the firing squad (because the state is a boss too, and getting to be the biggest boss). When a boss is productive it is as a worker and not as a boss.

It is perhaps Reich's error in the evaluation of the working boss which leads him to a second, namely he considers Labour-Management Councils (in the U.S.) as an example of a progressive work democratic relationship. Anyone can say Labour-Management co-operation (I resent, however, the word management from the beginning). However, even if we use labour-technician the questions still remain—who gets the profits? Who decides what is produced? Who decides the fundamental questions of hours? What of the character of the work? Who is to do what work? How is the unpleasant work to be apportioned? What of the distribution of the product? In the boss economy—the bosses decide and the workers are roped into the Labour-Management Committees and it is a not too subtle way to make them more efficient slaves—perpetuating the illusion that it is "their" factory. It was also perhaps Reich's initial distance from the American scene that made him such an easy prey to this one. However, these committees are of course one other sign of the growing demand of workers and individuals to control their own destiny in the industrial age. However, they are a feint, to throw the freedom movement off balance. And they haven't fooled anyone either: except a few labour fakers who think by now that left is right and right left anyway, or better still that the state is they and they are the state.

## VII

Reich says that the best revolutionary is one who is sexually satisfied and sexually free (in his sense). While anyone else can be revolutionary the best freedom workers are those who have their irrational energies released and being personally satisfied and content can see the rational need for a revolutionary change in the economic and social order. All others, in varying degrees tend to be irrational and therefore less effective.

There are those who claim that Reich says that the Sexual Revolution must come first. Well to me the sexual revolution is part of the whole revolution, and it may be true that until much of this block is removed we may not get too far with the concretization of our economic theories. Somehow the problem has a which came first the chicken or the egg air to it. Reich has an aversion to and nothing but bad words for political parties and political machinations and manipulations (this is leadership). We certainly can go along with him there.

Indeed since the sex energy and the

work energy are fundamentally the same it would seem logical for them both to be liberated together.

In his book *The Sexual Revolution*, Reich shows the degeneration of the Soviet Union in the light of its trend toward a reactionary sex programme which it has to-day: i.e., curbing of co-education, strengthening the authoritarian family, tightening of divorce laws. He does not to my remembrance establish the causal sequence. Did the economic degeneration lead to a character degeneration or did the character degeneration lead to an economic degeneration? In my opinion—both and reinforcing each other. (This is the negative of the preceding discussion.) Their exact relationship and our possible points of attack in different concrete situations must be worked out. Neither can be ignored.

In *The Mass Psychology of Fascism*, Reich analyses the character structure of the mass of Germans as being repressed, rigid, authoritarian, middle class, submissive, sadistic, masochistic. This whole constellation (more definitely linked) he calls the fascist character structure. This character structure permitted Hitler to come into power. The Left Politicians have always claimed that Hitler got the support of the people by demagoguery and by misleading them. They have never explained why it was possible to mislead and demagogize a whole people. Reich's answer is: their authoritarian character structure (which is not limited to Germany or any class and it not vanished from the earth).

Far from sex satisfaction acting as a deterrent to revolutionary activity, Reich claims it makes the revolutionary more rational and effective. One sees examples of the "married and settled down" bourgeoisified ex-revolutionary but one wonders if the individual is really sex satisfied, a "genital character" in Reichian terms. For, for Reich, intercourse and complete orgasm are two different and most times very wide apart affairs. He says it is almost impossible for anyone in our society to be orgasmically potent.

The less sex-satisfaction a person has the less time and energy he will be able to devote to other (more social) problems. His sex problem will tie him in knots.

I should make clear here one and for all (although I think the whole tenor of his theory shows it) that sex for Reich is not just physical sex but is what someone might call love. He is not afraid to use the term 'love' either (but love categorically including sex and the orgasm). Sex is not just physical sex, but a personal interrelationship. Reich maintains complete orgasm is not possible unless there is this personal harmony, love and respect between the partners.

## VIII

Reich says that as a person becomes orgasmically free, he will no longer tolerate a stupid job. He demands useful, creative work.

Just so our society (which tolerates, nay asks for useless, stupid, boring and harmful work) to the extent to which the individuals in it become sexually and personally free—just so perhaps our society

as it becomes liberated will in general not tolerate this tremendous mass of useless, stupid, boring and harmful work which a casual study of the census of occupations will show beyond a shadow of doubt, that or a real glance about us.

## IX

While socialists have been talking about Industrial Democracy for decades now, it is well to re-examine the concept under new light, especially since the Russian bureaucratic collectivist experience, the British state-capitalist fiasco and the general trend toward a mass collectivist-state-managerial-planned-totalitarian-work bureaucratic society.

According to Reich, Work Democracy is "A rational democratic organisation (of society N.B.) based not on formal and political democratic mechanisms but on actual achievement in work and actual responsibility of each individual for his own existence and social function. As yet non-existent, it is that form of democratic organisation into which present formal democracy might develop" (or better, which might develop in spite of present-day formal democracy. N.B.)

Work democracy is rooted in the natural desire of man to make and use the things he needs and to control the methods, conditions and distribution of the work of his mind, body, heart and soul.

It emphasises the responsibility of each individual in his rôle in society. It negates politics in the old formal sense, attacks leadership, dependence, unconsciousness of work power and creative force, and demands: "Give Responsibility to Vitrally Necessary Work!" Free the individual and his character structure for love, for knowledge and for creative, necessary, interesting and exciting work.

Permit man to become the healthy, exuberant, loving animal that he is. What is necessary is to remove the obstacles to this more loving and lovable man that the state, his own irrational authoritarian character structure, capitalist (or class) society, the church, the authoritarian school, the patriarchal family, have imposed for the past 4-6,000 years.

Once these obstacles are removed man will blossom forth into the self-governing, the free character, the free man.

For in each child is the bud of freedom growing.

How are we to remove these obstacles? This, of course, is the crux of the problem. Certainly not by abdicating our power, by getting others to do it for us. Neither by ignoring the "objective" (economic) situation. Neither by ignoring the character situation. (To an unfortunate man is his institutions.) The Marxists in the Soviet Union seemed to have paid too little attention to this "cultural problem". Certainly one thing we can do is to try and spread vital knowledge and better still to act in our daily lives (and try and find ways of acting) in consonance with our general freedom, sex economic and work democratic beliefs. This is no easy task. (Yet the easiest in the world.) The more we do this, the happier we shall be.

Perhaps only the sight of joy will move us.

JACK GALLEGOS.

# D. H. LAWRENCE and EDUCATION

AS next year will be the twentieth anniversary of the death of D. H. Lawrence, it is a suitable moment to recall that in many of his writings, mainly in *Phoenix* and *Fantasia of the Unconscious*, he formulated an approach to child education that deserves closer attention than it usually receives.

Lawrence has often been called Fascist, due I believe, to his insistence on the essential inequality of men and the fitness of some to express the desires of the whole. He was a poet of unusual sensitivity and was aware that certain people are capable of contacting reality in a manner unknown to others. Nevertheless, he denounced the enslavement of society to money and the machine, and he continuously sought in his wanderings around the world, and on certain occasions attempted to create, a way of life based on fundamental values and a relationship between individuals, not far from the ideas of some anarchists.

He was preoccupied with the realisation that much of man's neurosis was due to there being no real 'togetherness' amongst people. "For it is only when we can get a man to fall back into his true relation with other men and with women, that we can give him an opportunity to be himself... men must get back into touch." His own experience as a teacher had convinced him that the existing educational system merely increased a person's own isolation, and because of this he was opposed to any sort of moulding of the child to a pattern. The method he advocated was mainly intended to preserve the child's natural sensibility, so that when reason comes he is able to meet this sudden awareness of himself, and of 'other selves over against him' with integrity, and so avoid, what Lawrence called, "the division inside himself".

In his novel *The Rainbow*, we find a most interesting comment on the teacher's position with reference to the pupil. Ursula, on becoming a pupil-teacher, instinctively and consciously set out to establish a relationship with the children based on mutual respect; nevertheless, she was forced to resort in the end to methods of force and compulsion that tradition required, that her fellow teachers practised themselves and demanded of her. Lawrence thought of the teacher as an anticipator of the real needs of the child, rather than as an instructor. Through the teacher the child would "grow up true to his own essential self", and the teacher's responsibility is therefore one of selection.

Lawrence did not believe that absolute freedom for man was either possible or desirable, yet he realised that unless a child was allowed to live according to its own values it could not escape becoming enslaved to the false standards of society. "What we want is to destroy our false, inorganic connections, especially those related to money and to re-establish the living organic connections with the cosmos, the sun and earth, with mankind and nation and family. Start with the sun and the rest will slowly, slowly happen." He abhorred Socialism and Communism, because though offering man freedom, they were systems still based on these false standards. He knew that for a man to truly find himself, that is, to be "free", and yet retain his "oneness" with man-

kind, something other than the mere social system must be changed. As he was not a social reformer, nor an educationalist, nor a politician, but a poet, he realised that in order to exist as such the principles upon which human beings base their lives must be changed and he understood the part child education must play in bringing this about.

Some of his opinions may have differed from the trends educational experiments have taken, such as his belief that the intimate relationship between the sexes brought about by co-educational methods was a detrimental one, deadening to a deep sex life. His main contentions, however, are principles entirely valid and of universal worth: that we must educate to "a new, organic system, free as far as ever it can be from automatism or mechanism: a system which depends on the profound, spontaneous soul of men"; that we should never forget to leave the child "alone, with his own soul's indivisibility" that it is a unique individual, and that it is our responsibility to see that it "shall come to its own final form; and fullness, both physical and mental"; that the adult-child relationship should be a question of honour. "Forget utterly that there is such a thing as emotional reciprocity. But never forget your own honour as an individual towards a small individual. It is a question of honour, not of love."

In the end, it is not a question of social reform, or of political opinions. It is one of fundamental values and of these D. H. Lawrence, more than most people, was uniquely aware. Because of this, his views on child education are of importance.

I. P. SHANKS.

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John Wakeman:

Anarchism and Democracy 2d.

Elisee Reclus:

Evolution and Democracy 2d.

Wm. C. Owen:

Anarchism versus Socialism 3d.

# FREEDOM BOOKSHOP

27 RED LION STREET LONDON - W.C.I.



# THE PEASANT REVOLT IN ITALY

IN the issue of *Freedom* for November, 26th (p. 1 and p. 3), we reported the seizures of land by the peasants of Sicily and Southern Italy which have since spread, even as far as the Po valley in the North. The Italian peasants have invaded the land after every war since the days of the Punic Wars of 264-146 B.C., and the present occupations are the culmination of a continuous series of sporadic and isolated seizures which have taken place since the last war. In fact, as Prime Minister de Gasperi admitted last week, by the end of 1947, 375,000 acres had already been occupied, and for the period 1946-9 the total is 600,000 acres.

Basil Davidson writing in the *New Statesman* from Cantanzaro in Calabria, says: "It began in Calabria on a small scale in 1945, and grew in the next two years, only to meet, in 1948, with strengthened resistance by the landowners, who, with the Government firmly behind them after Demochristian victory last year, proceeded to evict the peasants again. These evictions began to be applied, a few weeks ago, to land which the Government had previously decreed should pass to the peasants (but which the peasants, in fact, had had to take). The evictions might have continued. Instead, they have given rise to a new and vaster wave of peasant agitation."

## MURDER AT MESSINA

Mr. Davidson goes to to describe the events at Messina, where 13 peasants due to be evicted, were shot down by the police, three of them fatally. "A group was working at Fragala on Sunday afternoon, October 30, when they saw police approaching from above. They were about 150 men and women, some of the latter with their babies and smaller children. They told me that they clapped the police because they thought that anyone must be pleased to see this land, barren for more than ten years, fresh and clean again beneath the plough. The police, the said, came down towards them shouting for them to 'put down their arms'. As they had no arms, they merely stood still. Late that night, long after dark, they were still gathering their dead and wounded."

He made an exhaustive investigation and found that the official version which described the peasants as armed and declares that they threw grenades, entirely untrue, and visiting the casualties in hospital he saw that they were wounded by bullets fired from behind—fired, that is, while they were running away. Meanwhile, "six peasants arrested by this posse of police at Fragala are still in gaol, 'pending inquiry', while no sanctions of any kind appear to have been taken against the police."

In the last week of November, Caltagirone in South East Sicily became the centre of further land seizures. This is the birthplace of the infamous Mario Scelba, the Italian Minister of the Interior, who has ordered the police to shoot if necessary to clear peasants from the land they have occupied. The first violent incident reported was between 250 police and as many peasants who had staked their claims and were settling in and building huts.

The peasants were finally evicted—a

few of them to hospital—and motorised and armed police cleared another estate at San Pietro.

Near Catania, the peasants have been playing "hide and seek" with the police, hiding when they arrive and taking possession when they go.

## ON TO ROME

On December 6th, peasants around Rome seized land and began sowing at once. A peasant on Rome's outskirts told a correspondent: "This is not politics as far as I am concerned. It is much simpler—a matter of bread for our bellies. Another also expressed the mood of thousands. "I have planted my seed and intend to reap the harvest," he said. "If the police want to move me they will have to carry me off—dead." The princes, following the example of the Calabrian and Sicilian barons, started cultivating all available land.

At Cerverteri, ruled by Prince Ruspoli, all available tractors came out to plough up fields and prevent further occupation, and the *News Chronicle* reported that the big owners are trying to stem this land rush by cultivating more acres. It is their only protection.

They have spent vast sums (which they said they did not possess) to plough and sow land which would otherwise be seized. In Lucania and Calabria thousands more acres have been cultivated.

Two days later, peasants were occupying scrubland around Rome and several hundred farm labourers, man and women seized more idle acres in Sicily. Police fired into the air in an effort to drive them off.

Though it was reported that on the 7th, the peasants "were still holding about 6,000 acres of the 80,000 originally seized, but they were expected to withdraw after establishing a symbolical claim to the land," the seizures continued on the following days. Resentment against the Government and police was still running high, and armed police riot squads were patrolling country roads in case of clashes. And the *Daily Telegraph* reports with scandalized emphasis that, "estates of some of the greatest Italian families have been invaded."

At Laterza, near Taranto, 3,000 peasants occupied seven farms, but left after pegging out "claims". They carried placards with the words, "We have fought and the land should be ours."

In some areas the columns were so numerous and strong that the local police were not in sufficient numbers either to turn them back or prevent them from occupying land.

Most of the zones affected by the agitation lie within a 15 to 20 miles area around the capital, and include Bracciano, Cerveteri, and Monterotondo, in the north and north-west, Aprilia, Aricia, and Cisterna in the south, Maccarese in the west, and Rocca di Papa and other hill towns in the south-east. Part of the land occupied belongs to big estates owned by the Roman aristocracy, the Torlonia and Ruspoli families among them.

On December 14th, police fired on a crowd of several thousand farm workers near Bari and wounded eight of them.

## THE GOVERNMENT

WHEN Signor de Gasperi, the Italian Christian Democrat Prime Minister, recently visited Calabria, the southernmost province of Italy, he was, the press reports, "genuinely moved by the sight of the wretched misery he found" and in his speech at Camignatello, he said, "If we proceed with outmoded, absolute ideas of private property, we shall never make progress," and his speech culminated in this warning to the big landowners: "Beware, if you have not realised that your hour has come—Beware!"

Now, de Gasperi's remarks are very true, but the fact remains, the *Tribune* says, "he happens to be the leader of a party which counts among its members and supporters many important representatives of the big land-owning interests who do everything in their power to prevent or sabotage any serious kind of land reform."

And it is curious to learn that members of the Italian cabinet discovered with surprise and horror of conditions in the south when the ordinary book reader in this country has learnt vividly of these conditions from the novels of Ignazio Silone and from Carlo Levi's book *Christ Stopped at Eboli*.

## WHAT PRICE PACIFISM?

THE World Pacifist Congress (discussed by an Indian correspondent in our last issue) is now meeting at Santiniketan. It is reported that the meeting is "causing some heart-searchings among political heirs of Gandhi's creed of non-violence".

Mr. Rajagopalachari, the Governor-General, has been the most honest in his reaction. In his message of welcome to the delegates he admitted:

"India is maintaining her army and other military forces up to the measure of her capacity. She cannot without hypocrisy claim to be a nation pledged to pacifism."

Prime Minister Nehru has shown the most embarrassment. After expressing his desire to attend the congress he had been wondering what impression his armed escort of jeeps and motor-cycles, necessary for his personal safety, would make on this peace-loving assembly.

The Governor of West Bengal, Dr. Katju, in his inaugural address asked the not inappropriate question: "Why does the Indian Union keep more men under arms than did the whole Indian Empire before the war?"

But he did not tell us the answer!

We showed, in our issue of 26/11/49, how the direct action of the peasants was forcing the authorities into making belated special land distributions to the peasants. The Government, as the *News Chronicle* points out: "is trying to stem the revolt by tokens", and the *New Statesman* says that the authorities "are trying partly to forestall and partly to appease the peasants." And this is correct. De Gasperi in his press conference last week asked correspondents not to confuse the Land Improvement Bill with the new confiscation bills. They were quite separate. The Land Improvement Bill had, he said, "in some cases caused the sudden dismissal of peasants after improvements had been made. This," said de Gasperi, "was a point at which the local prefect could usefully intervene to effect a compromise."

The manner in which the local prefect "usefully intervenes" can be seen in the police murders at Messina. The Bill for expropriation (with generous compensation) of 112,000 acres in Calabria—the government's appeasement measure, is merely a cynical tinkering with the question. Especially when we learn that the land "is to be handed gradually to peasants who can pay for it." The speech quoted above that de Gasperi made at Camignatello, was evidently meant for local consumption only, for in his press conference he warned that: "The peasants had stated their needs and these had gone before a commission. At present small co-operatives were marching, and when one marched another would march, and even some Christian Democrat co-operatives would march. The idea might get round that private property no longer existed, and at that point the Ministry would have to intervene and a halt be called."

As for the Christian Democratic programme of land reforms, the *Tribune* (9/12/49) points out that it will not give land to the landless peasants. "For the reform is based, not on the size of properties, but on their profits and thus exempts most of the big Southern landowners whose latifondi are startlingly unproductive—to say nothing of the fact that this much advertised measure provides for the free sale within the next two years of land assigned for distribution."

## THE MAFIA

It is reported that the Mafia rallied to the support of the Sicilian landowners "in considerable force", and a dispatch from Palermo says that "the Agrarians refuse to disband the Mafia. The peasants want to negotiate directly with the landlords in accordance with the law on the assignment of uncultivated lands, but, as the bailiffs and rent collectors are usually members of the Mafia and would lose their jobs after the assignment, they are fiercely resisting and rallying round the landlords. The landlords themselves show no signs of wishing to break with these vampires of our Sicilian countryside."

One of Basil Davidson's informative articles in the *New Statesman* discusses the rôle played by the sinister secret society in Sicily, he says that banners and signboards carried in procession

through Palermo carried an ancient war-cry: "The land to the Peasants!" They also carried a new one, a sign that the peasant unions have come to maturity and have learnt to look beyond the immediate need for land—"Down with the Mafia!"

Mr. Davidson explains that, "Survival of the Mafia is the consequence of the customs of land tenure peculiar to this island. Latifondi in Sicily are leased, in the general way, not to the peasants who work the land, but gabellotti, intermediaries or sub-contractors (originally, perhaps, mere bailiffs) who lease in their turn to smaller intermediaries and so on down the scale until, at third or fourth remove from the actual owner, the land is leased eventually to the man who works it. This method of tenure explains not only the Mafia, but also the appalling abandonment of the latifondi of Sicily—whole ranges of hills and plateaux where one may go for miles without seeing sign of life or human habitation. Few or none of the intermediaries invest in the land they rent; their object seems exclusively to extort from the peasant more than they must pay the landlord. Having leased his land by agreements which are usually for many years, the landlord does not invest either; he merely takes his rent."

"The terror of the Mafia works both ways. The gabellotti mafiosi terrorise the peasants into giving them unduly much payment in produce for the land they sub-lease; and they terrorise the landowners into continued agreement with their terms. While they tend to murder the peasants, they usually let the landowners off with a fat ransom."

"But why should the landowners not rid themselves of this terror by calling in the State, by refusing once and for all to pay blackmail, by siding with the peasants? The answer lies in the last part of the question. However much a nuisance it may be from time to time, the Mafia can always be relied upon to act against the peasants."

## THE COMMUNISTS

The Communists have played their usual rôle of attempting to cash in on popular discontents, and both the authorities and the press have been attributing the peasant rising to Communist agitation. Certainly, just as in the "squatters" movement in Britain, a few years ago, and in many other popular movements, the Communists have provided the authorities with the excuse and opportunity for taking counter-measures which would not have been possible otherwise. Mr. Davidson points out in the *New Statesman* that the peasants are on the march, "not, as the authorities in Rome would have one believe, because they are 'incited by the agents of the Kremlin', but because hunger and despair drive hard, and because the alternative is lingering death," and as an Italian right-wing daily, quoted in our issue of 26/11/49, emphasised, "It is false to call these people Communists. They feel they have reached the limit of endurance."

### Footnote

At Potenza, the capital city of Lucania, perched 2,500 ft up, these words are scrawled in tar on the main building—"Long live hope."

## THROUGH THE PRESS

### ANARCHISTS CLASH IN BARCELONA

Six "Anarchist terrorists" and a policeman were shot dead in an armed clash in Barcelona, Spanish officials said to-night. Fifteen men have been arrested.

*News Chronicle*, 1/11/49.

### OH YEAH!

The Vatican officially announced to-day that in the New Year—which is to be a Holy Year—the Pope will proclaim a new dogma for all Roman Catholics: that the Virgin Mary ascended bodily to heaven.

There was complete agreement on the new dogma, but it is learned that the Jesuits were against an immediate proclamation. They hold it may embarrass the Greek Orthodox Church, whose members believe that Mary is buried in Palestine.

*Daily Express*, 12/12/49.

It took them a long time to find out!

### CELESTIAL JOE

Johannes Becher, "Poet Laureate" of East Germany, to-night announced he has written a poem to "Stalin, the immortal, whose name is written in the firmament."

*Daily Express*, 9/12/49.

### ...ATOMIC JOE

The President of the Soviet Academy of Sciences, Mr. Sergei Vavilov, announced the creation of an atomic weapon, under Stalin's direction, "in an unheard-of short time."

*Sunday Express*, 18/12/49.

### NO ROOM FOR FRANCO'S ENEMIES

The Spanish sloop *Pépito*, which arrived yesterday with 36 men aboard who, the captain said, were escaping from the Franco regime, sailed today for Venezuela after being given 24 hours' notice by the authorities here.

—Report from British Guiana in

*News Chronicle*, 7/12/49.

### DOING HIS OWN DIRTY WORK

As long as we have the barbarous anachronism of hanging, the State, represented by the Home Secretary, should activate the switch situated on the Rt. Hon. Gentleman's desk. Killing by proxy is a detestable business.

—Letter in

*Evening Standard*, 15/12/49.

### COME-BACK

At one time when Montague Norman presided over the Bank of England a solitary picture stood on the mantelpiece of his private office.

It was a Strube cartoon of Dr. Hjalmar Schacht, who manipulated Hitler's money bags, and was a close friend of the governor of our Bank when its policy was to support Germany.

Both men now languish in retirement. But Dr. Schacht looks like getting busy again.

He is writing a series of "Financial and Commercial News Letters", which are in great demand not only in Germany but in Switzerland and America also.

*Sunday Express*, 11/12/49.

## Morality in Politics

IT was not so long ago that the headlines told us of the gallant efforts of the illegal Jewish immigrants from Europe to run the British blockade in Palestine. From a strictly legal point of view the British were carrying out the policy of limiting immigration to an agreed figure. The Jews were highly indignant, and there were some harrowing scenes in the overloaded ships taking them to Palestine.

One hoped that these experiences would have made them more understanding towards others in a similar situation. But, no, politicians are all the same whether Jew or Gentile, or Hindu. In India, Nehru has allowed Gandhi's assassins to be hanged, and admits that thousands of "Communists suspects" are imprisoned without trial. His experiences at the hand of British Imperialism have not taught him anything—except that when one becomes the ruling class one has to put aside all ideas of justice and tolerance, and follow in the path of one's persecutors.

And now from Israel one learns that in densely-populated Arab villages of Galilee, the Israel Army is conducting a full-scale search operation to weed out hundreds of Arab infiltrators from Lebanon, Syria and Jordan.

In an action completed last month at Shafamr, a large village northwest of Nazareth, Israel soldiers collected 200 Arabs who reportedly had no identification cards. They were transported to the Lebanese frontier and compelled to leave Israel.

The search of Shafamr followed a prescribed pattern. A curfew was imposed on the village and soldiers began a house-to-house check. Those Arabs who had not registered with the military government or who had no cards issued in the last

national registration were earmarked for removal.

In October, the Military Governor of Galilee published the warning that local Arabs who aided infiltrators would be fined and imprisoned. Soon afterward the army moved in and several hundred Arabs were deported.

The Israelis contend that infiltration across wide open frontiers has reached alarming proportions. It is estimated that Israel's Arab population is now above 175,000, an increase of nearly 100,000 in the last year.

A press report states that an Arab Communist member of Israel's Knesset protested against the searches and evictions, describing the operation as "undemocratic". Prime Minister David Ben Gurion "turned upon him in full fury" and "accused the Arab legislator of being a former ally of Haj Amin el Hussein, ex-Mufti of Jerusalem and thus a secret agitator against Israel. He asserted that Israel was surrounded by enemies and the infiltration served to undermine the security of the state. In the midst of his angry outburst, he accused the Cominform of 'slandering' the Israel government."

How familiar is this kind of language! When one has no answer one attacks the person or group of persons asking the question, and in working up personal hatred of those people one hopes that the main issue will have been forgotten. How reminiscent of Hitler when he denounced "International Jewry" or Stalin the "Trotsky-Fascists"!

Can we not learn a lesson from all this? If we do, and act accordingly, then a step has been made towards the realisation of a society without rulers.

R.

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# ANARCHISM AND THE STATE

"The interests of the State and those of the individual differ fundamentally and are antagonistic. The State and the political and economic institutions it supports can exist only by fashioning the individual to its particular purpose; training him to respect 'law and order'; teaching him obedience, submission and unquestioning faith in the wisdom and justice of government; above all, loyal service and complete self-sacrifice when the State commands it, as in war."

EMMA GOLDMAN.

THE Anarchist movement has always been distinguished from other revolutionary movements by its consistent opposition to the State. But it is not simply enough to oppose the State and advocate its abolition—it is necessary for us to make clear what we mean by the term "State" and what, fundamentally, our position is with regard to those sections of the Socialist movement who are critical of the State, either as a means of realising social justice or as an institution in their conception of a free society.

Anarchists usually define the State as either "the executive of the ruling class" or "the coercive superstructure of a property society". Both these definitions are correct insofar as they go, but the State is something more as well. It is not only, as Kropotkin said, "A power placed above society, but also a territorial concentration of many and even all of the functions of the life of society in the hands of a few." This control of the life of society is exercised through the centralised apparatus of the police, judiciary, armed forces, Church, bureaucracy, etc., and is achieved, in moral coercion, but also by the educational and propaganda systems which condition the people into the acceptance of authority as necessary and inevitable. Thus the modern State is a vast, parasitic growth upon society. An institution whose enormity and complexity cowers even the sceptical individual into acquiescence.

That the dangers of the utilisation of the State for the achievement of a free society are recognised by certain elements in the Socialist movement to-day is a fact obvious to even the most cursory reader of left-wing literature. These elements are best represented in Britain by such bodies as the I.L.P. and, to a lesser extent, Common Wealth. However, it is important to note that this criticalness appears to be confined to the centralised State alone and does not extend to those other spheres of life where authority proves equally noxious.

## AGAINST ALL AUTHORITY

Unlike this type of Socialist, the Anarchist does not merely oppose the State. He does not merely seek the abolition of centralised government, as some rather more enlightened sympathisers seem to think, but opposes

equally the authority of town councils or, for that matter, of one's next-door neighbour. Malatesta, in his essay *Anarchy*, makes this quite clear. He says:

"By 'State' again is meant only the supreme administration of a country, the central power, as distinct from provincial or communal government, and therefore others think that Anarchists wish merely for territorial decentralisation, leaving the principle of government intact, and thus confound Anarchy with cantonal or communal government."<sup>2</sup>

Kropotkin, too, was aware of this important distinction. In his pamphlet, *Modern Science and Anarchism*, he writes:

"More than that. We made one step more. We understand that if no central Government was needed to rule the independent Communes, if the national Government is thrown overboard and national unity is obtained by free federation, then a central municipal Government becomes equally useless and noxious. The same federative principle would do within the Commune."<sup>3</sup>

Again, Anarchism does not limit its advocacy of the abolition of authority to what are commonly called 'social affairs', but seeks the realisation of its ideal of free initiative in the home, the school, the workshop, in every human relationship. It lays especial emphasis upon the elimination of the authoritarian, legal family, that "factory of authoritarian ideology" as Reich calls it. By their interest in those aspects of human life usually considered outside the realm of 'politics' Anarchists demonstrate the much more far-reaching and fundamental transformation in human relationships they envisage than the ad-

1 *The State: Its Historic Role* (p. 10, 1942 edition).

2 *Anarchy* (p. 9, 1949 edition).

3 *Modern Science and Anarchism* (p. 61, 1923 edition).

herents of other doctrines of social revolution.

## VINDICATION

The situation to-day provides an eloquent vindication of the Anarchist attitude towards the State. The reactionary nature of the so-called Socialist government is evident to all who have any knowledge of the original ideas of the Socialist pioneers and proves once again the truth of the Anarchist opposition to government. Not only has the State, under the guidance of the present government, extended its deadening influence into more and more the life of the individual, but its propaganda machine, both official and unofficial, has succeeded in inculcating the worker with a slave psychology of the worst kind. Never has revolutionary activity been at such a low ebb, and, in spite of the optimistic forecasts generated by the recent strikes, the workers appear to be further away from an understanding of the true character of capitalism and government than they were fifty years ago. The growth of this state of affairs is such as to induce some comrades to demand unity with all 'libertarian elements' within the Labour movement. That co-operation on certain specific issues, such as anti-militarism, may be of value the present writer does not deny (of value, that is, in furthering the disintegration of the contemporary system of society) but we have seen in the past so many good Anarchists lost to reformism by specious pleas for unity that we are justified in regarding with suspicion any such overtures that are made to-day. Let us not place too much hope, either, upon the supposed penetration of Anarchist ideas into certain Left-wing political circles, remember the number of politicians who have been elected into betrayal with libertarian and revolutionary phrases on their lips.

What then should be our attitude towards the 'anti-State' elements in the Socialist movement in this country? It should be one of co-operation on those issues, especially anti-militarism which to-day must necessarily be anti-State, which do not involve any betrayal of our principles. We must on every occasion, however, make clear our repudiation of authority in whatever guise it may appear. Anarchism is a social philosophy which denies the rule of man over man. In doing so it involves the negation of authority and consequently seeks to replace government by voluntary co-operation, law and mutual agreement and property and capitalism by free communism. It is this conception of how human society should be arranged that we must continually contrast with the nebulous notions of the "withering away of the State."

S. E. PARKER.

# Readers Write:

## WHOSE CONSPIRACY? ONE LAW FOR THE RICH...

THE interesting case of Sapper "Mossy" Simons, who bribed a corporal to help him escape from the guardroom at Barton Stacey Camp (Hampshire) raises at least one question ignored in general by the Press.

The sensational aspects of the adventure—the £500 bribe, the 1 a.m. car, the escape to a block of flats in London, and then to Ireland—were reported in full, and although money was the motive for the corporal, the general organisation by Simons' friends seems to have been slick and efficient.

But a correspondent has drawn our attention to one piece of police action which deserves a little airing. The *Manchester Guardian* (13/10/49) reported one part of the court proceedings thus:—

"Detective Inspector R. H. B. Whitehead described Simons' arrest in Dublin on August 21st.

"Mr. J. T. Molony (for Simons): The warrant charged him under common law with a conspiracy?—Yes.

"Was that the only means by which this man could be apprehended in Ireland?—It was the only thing I knew of.

"What has happened to that charge?—Moss Simons appeared before a Court at Andover, but no evidence was offered to the Court by the Director of Public Prosecutions' representative.

"Then the charge has been dropped?—Yes."

So a very pretty police practice comes to light. The Inspector was able to obtain a warrant on a common-law charge which was never pressed against Simons. It was simply a tactic to get him out of Ireland and back to England, since extradition would not have been allowed by the Irish authorities on the charge of "desertion" on which he was tried.

How far could this be developed? Could anybody be dragged back to this country to face trial simply by the police obtaining a warrant to arrest on "the only thing they knew of"—irrespective of how relevant it may be to the man's real "offences"?

Our correspondent concludes:—  
"An interesting question arises, certainly of ethics if not also of law; as this seems to be a useful way to recapture people who may have sought refuge in foreign countries for various reasons. Perhaps our legal system will go so far in the direction of, say, Eastern Europe, that some future British Government will be able to bring refugee political opponents home to face fabricated charges (later to be dropped) of conspiracy, theft, or even more serious common-law offences.

"On which side, one could ask, was the 'conspiracy'?"

TWO recent cases in Scottish courts illustrate the truth of the assertion that there is one law for the rich and one law for the poor (see *A Victory over Class Justice* in *Freedom*, 10/12/49). The wife of an Army officer "of substantial rank" admitted at Ayrshire Court to the theft of a dress clip, valued at £020 from a bedroom at a hotel where she and her husband were guests at a luncheon party. For the defence it was stated that the woman's act was completely unreasonable; she did not lack for anything and there was no purpose in the theft.

Sheriff Reid said it seemed to him the suffering the woman had already experienced was punishment enough. Sentence was deferred for a year.

On the same day, in Thurso, an unemployed labourer who admitted having stolen and drunk 19 bottles of milk was sentenced to 30 days imprisonment. On one occasion, police saw him removing a bottle of milk, and they followed him.

For an "unreasonable" theft, with "no purpose" a rich woman gets the sheriff's sympathy, while for a petty theft with an obvious purpose, an unemployed labourer is imprisoned.

Glasgow.

XYZ.

## MISCONCEPTION

IN your last issue you lavish praise on the *Delphic Review*. I see that this magazine describes Mr. Herbert Read as "the intellectual leader of the anarchist movement in this country". Yet your paper keeps plugging the idea of no leaders.

London.

J.G.

[Our correspondent's logic is at fault. We didn't describe Read, as anything of the sort and we are sure he would be the last person to make such a claim.]

## ANOTHER

IN an apparently serious B.B.C. talk on *Politics in Paris To-day*, the commentator said:

"The only man I came across in Paris with any interest whatever in political theory was the concierge of my hotel. He had just thought out a political creed of his own, which he called *Panarchisme conservateur*: anarchism, because you grab anything you like the look of from anyone who happens to have it, conservative because you then take steps to see that no one grabs it from you."

What has *Freedom* to say to this? Manchester. P.D.T.  
[Only that we hope our French comrades will give the concierge a copy of the *Libertaire* and let him know what anarchism is really all about.]

## Meetings and Announcements

### UNION OF ANARCHIST GROUPS: CENTRAL LONDON

INDOOR Lecture-Discussions every Sunday at 7.30 p.m. at the

Trade Union Club, Great Newport St., W.C.2 (near Leicester Square Station).

January 1st Speaker: Tony Gibson  
"CHILDHOOD AND SOCIAL REVOLUTION"

January 8th Speaker: Philip Sansom  
"ANARCHO-SYNDICALISM AND TRADES-UNIONISM"

January 15th Speaker: Charles Duff  
"FRANCO'S BLUE PARADISE"

January 22nd Speaker: Alan Smith  
"WILLIAM GODWIN"

### GLASGOW ANARCHIST GROUP

INDOOR MEETINGS every Sunday at 7 p.m. at the

CENTRAL HALLS, 25 BATH STREET, GLASGOW.  
Frank Leech, John Gaffney, Eddie Shaw.

### MERSEYSIDE ANARCHIST GROUP

OPEN DISCUSSION MEETINGS held fortnightly

PLEASE NOTE: NEXT MEETING Sunday, January 15th, at 7.30 p.m. Meetings fortnightly thereafter. Enquiries: Ring Royal 4669

### COLNE & NELSON DISTRICT

Discussion Group to be held fortnightly. Sunday, January 1st, at 3.0 p.m. at  
Twisters and Drawers Club, Cambridge Street, Colne (Lancs.)

### HAMPSTEAD

Discussion Meetings at 7.30 prompt at 5, Villas-on-the-Heath, Vale of Health, Hampstead, N.W.3 There will be no meeting on Dec. 27th, discussion will be resumed on Jan. 3rd.

## Workers' Power and the Electric Strike

(Continued from page 1)

### The Sleeping Giant Stirs

It is precisely these circumstances, however, in which the workers find their strength. The capitalist economy of Britain is frantically geared up for the export drive, which demands the unceasing effort of the productive workers in those industries which either produce goods directly for export or produce the fuel and power to drive those industries.

The coal industry falls into both categories. We both export coal and transform it into power for our factories. We do not export either gas or electricity, but these three industries, coal, gas and electricity, are the absolute and indispensable bases of our modern mechanised society. Without their working at full pressure, the Crippsian financial dreams go up in smoke—or, rather, in an absence of smoke. Capitalism depends upon the support of basic industry workers. If they chose, they could destroy it.

It is against this background that the recent lightning strike of London power workers shook the smug complacency of dwellers in the Metropolis. Electric juice is the life-blood of London, that great web of bricks and steel through which hurtle trams, trains and trolley-buses and which, without artificial lighting, become at dusk a jungle of lethal machines.

### Valid Claims of Strikers

We do not need here to go into the details of the causes of the strike. The men at three power stations came out because under the new national wage agreements, they were given an increase in basic wage of 1½d. per hour, but lost their "dirt and heat" bonuses. These agreements were drawn up by the British Electricity Authority (Chairman: Lord Citrine, ex-T.U.C. boss) and the leaders of the four unions which "represent" power workers. And the result, for the workers was a reduction in income averaging 5/8d. per week. Negotiation had proved useless, so eventually, the men simply downed tools without warning and walked out.

The Government immediately put in the troops, whereupon workers at Barking Power Station, the (largest in Europe), came out in sympathy. This, of course, stirred up the unions, who rushed around and, promising fresh negotiations (the B.E.A. said it "could not negotiate with unofficial strikers"), persuaded the men to go back. There was a false start, however, when the returning men found a notice on the works gates saying that they must return "unconditionally". This got them on the raw, as all high-handed action by authority is found to do, and they stayed out. The B.E.A., however,

IT is now a matter of common knowledge that power, whether its nature be monarchic, aristocratic or democratic, whether it be based on the right of the sword, of inheritance or election, is wielded by men neither better nor worse than their fellows, but whose position exposes them to greater temptation to do evil. Raised above the crowd, whom they soon learn to despise, they end by considering themselves essentially superior beings; solicited by ambition in a thousand forms, by vanity, greed and caprice, they are all the more easily corrupted that a rabble of interested flatterers is ever on the watch to profit by their views. And possessing as they do, preponderant influence in all things, holding the powerful lever whereby is moved the immense mechanism of the State—functionaries, soldiers and police—every one of their oversights, their faults, or their crimes repeats itself to infinity and magnifies as it grows.

ELISEE RECLUS.

(from *An Anarchist on Anarchy*, 1884)

hastily brought out the soft-soap bucket and smoothed things over. The men went back, and the dreadful prospect of a black Christmas was averted.

None of it very unusual, just the usual story of a short strike which nevertheless has compelled the authorities to wake up and realise that workers with grievances must be heard.

### The Power of the Workers

What the workers must learn from this strike, however, is that they are the people upon whom the whole of society depends for maintaining the basic necessities. This is so simple and obvious that we feel a bit foolish in writing it down—but it is also obvious that thousands—millions—of workers do not realise the strength of their own class, do not realise how easily they could be masters of the situation instead of slaves of capitalism.

As anarcho-syndicalists, we do not support the idea of the dictatorship of the proletariat. We do not want a "workers' government" any more than any other kind of government. The present Parliament contains many men who have sprung from the working-class—and a lot of good it does us!

No, what we do want to see is the workers in control of their own industries, controlling their environment, not each other. In the old phrase, "the administration of things, not the government of men." This we believe can be brought about by the workers taking direct action in the direction of assuming full control of their places of work. This can never be done by such indirect means as voting in somebody-or-other to Parliament, or attending joint-production committee meetings. It will be done by the rank-and-file waging ceaseless war against every aspect of class-divided society. They have the strength, and they can organise, as any unofficial strike shows. Let them have faith in themselves and determination to put an end to their own exploitation, and the wage-slavery of the present will become an evil memory of the past, and "Workers' Control" a reality in a world of peace and plenty.

## IRRESPONSIBILITY AND THE LAND

MR. John Thompson Donaldson, of Alloa, has bought the Channel Island of Brecqhou—160 acres in all, for £20,000. He told a newspaperman, "It was just one of those mad notions. I have seen the island twice and it looks quite an attractive spot, but, laddie, I have absolutely no idea what to do with it."

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